Buddhism in many paintings and sculptures. The delicate, almost feminine sensitiveness of the race may be divined in many a picture of flowers and animals and in intricate carving. In some of the temple representations of hell is the coarse vigor of Chinese popular life.

To do as we have in several of the immediately preceding chapters, and describe this phase of Chinese life as it was in the nineteenth century on the eve of the great change brought by the impact .of the Occident, would scarcely be adequate. The decadence of the Ch'ing which helped cast a blight over much of Chinese genius was reflected as clearly in art as in any phase of culture. We must, rather, attempt to show the main characteristics and the total achievement of the Chinese in the chief divisions of art and then indicate something of the effect of the West upon them.

ARCHITECTURE

Although for more than two thousand years the Chinese have been erecting buildings and walls, some of them of gigantic proportions, a surprisingly small proportion of the structures are very old. In their present form comparatively few go back as far as the T'ang and the Sung or even to the Yuan. Most of those which can boast of more than a century of age were put up, at least substantially as they are now, only in the Ming or in the prosperous first century and a half of the Ch'ing. To be sure, some walls of the Han are extant—largely because they have been preserved in the desert air ol the Western frontiers. There are many tombs from the Han and even earlier. A few rockhewn temples have come down from T'ang and even pre-T'ang times, and a number of pagodas built under the Sung and T'ang can still be seen.

Here and there are a very few temples which were probably erected before the T'ang. So, too, there are ancient stone bridges. Compared with the extent and richness of Chinese culture, however, the archeologist interested in architecture has available much less surviving material than in such sites of old civilizations as Mesopotamia, the Nile Valley, and the shores of the Mediterranean.

This dearth of structures of pre-Ming times is not due to the absence of building in these centuries. From books and paintings we know that then as now the land had palaces and temples, some